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Prime Minister's schedule, October 10

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

06:58

Met with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Ohno at the Kantei.

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09:00

Lower House Budget Committee meeting.

12:03

Returned to the Kantei.

13:00

Lower House Budget Committee meeting.

17:04

Met with Chairman Mun Hui Sang of the South Korea-Japan Parliamentary League. Finance Minister Nukaga, secretary general of the Japan-South Korea Parliamentary League, was present.

17:37

Met with Takebe, head of the Party Reform Implementation Headquarters, at the Kantei. Then met with US Senator Daniel Inoue.

20:08

Arrived at his residence in Nozawa.

- 4) New antiterrorism legislation to be approved in cabinet meeting Oct. 17

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
October 11, 2007

The government and ruling coalition decided yesterday that in order to start deliberations as early as the 18th at the House of Representatives, the cabinet of Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda will approve in a meeting on Oct. 17 the new antiterrorism special measures bill aimed at continuing the Maritime Self-Defense Force's (MSDF) refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. In a meeting today of the Lower House Steering committee, they will propose their plan to the opposition camp.

Interpellations at the House of Councillors Budget Committee are scheduled to run until the 17th. After the Upper House Budget Committee completes the question-and-answer sessions, a National Security Council meeting will be held. After this meeting, the Fukuda cabinet will hold a meeting to approve the new antiterrorism legislation for submission to the Lower House. The government and ruling camp intend to deliberate the legislation each and every day at the Lower House Special Committee to Prevent Terrorism and aim to pass it through the Lower House in early November.

- 5) Japanese oil to be limited to MIO vessels; Warships supporting air strikes will be excluded, says Komura

MAINICHI (Top play) (Excerpts)
October 11, 2007

Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura told the House of Representatives Budget Committee yesterday that the government would present new legislation allowing the Maritime Self-Defense Force to provide fuel only to the vessels taking part in the maritime interdiction operations (MIO) in the Indian Ocean. He thus indicated that the MSDF would not refuel warships supporting air strikes on Afghanistan. Komura was responding to a question by Katsuya Okada of the Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto or DPJ).

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In posing the question, Okada said regarding the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) that started in 2001 in Afghanistan that missile attacks and air strikes have been conducted on Afghanistan. In response, Komura admitted that the MSDF had temporarily refueled warships attacking Afghanistan as part of its logistical support, saying: "(At the initial stage of the OEF), the MSDF conducted its operations based on the right to self-defense (of the United States and other countries). The MSDF provided (fuel) under the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law in the OEF. After the establishment of the Karzai administration, the MSDF extended logistical support upon obtaining the concurrence of the administration."

Komura also said: "There is no problem under international law. We recognize that the MSDF is not doing so at present." Okada further asked: "Can you say for certain that (warships refueled by the MSDF) will not directly strike or launch missiles at Afghanistan (in the future)?" In response, Komura said: "Such will not occur because the new legislation we are going to submit to the Diet will not allow them."

6) Pentagon unveils details on MSDF fueling

ASAHI (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

WASHINGTON-In February 2003, shortly before the Iraq war, a Maritime Self-Defense Force supply ship, codenamed "Tokiwa" and operating in the Indian Ocean under Japan's Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, indirectly refueled the USS Kitty Hawk, a US Navy aircraft carrier. In this connection, the Kitty Hawk is suspected of having used MSDF-supplied fuel for operations in Iraq. On this issue, the US Department of Defense announced on the morning of Oct. 10 (or yesterday evening Japan time) that the suspicion is "wrong." The Kitty Hawk consumed more fuel than the amount of MSDF-supplied fuel during a period of three days when she was engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) against Afghanistan before her entry into a mission to watch Iraq in a northern area of the Persian Gulf, according to a Pentagon official.

The Pentagon, in its Oct. 10 statement released for the Japanese media, unveiled the quantities of MSDF fuel supplies and other details.

According to the statement, the Tokiwa refueled the Pecos, a US naval oiler, with 800,000 gallons on Feb. 25, 2003. Shortly thereafter, the Pecos supplied 675,000 gallons to the Kitty Hawk. Given that this fuel supply of 675,000 gallons from the Pecos to the Kitty Hawk was entirely provided by the Tokiwa, the Kitty Hawk could have consumed the 675,000 gallons in the light of her speed and operations within a three-day timeframe, the Pentagon says.

7) Tokyo, Washington deny fuel diversion, attempt to bring issue to close

ASAHI (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

The Maritime Self-Defense Force, which has been on a refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, indirectly refueled the USS Kitty Hawk, a US aircraft carrier, in February 2003. On this issue, the Japanese and US governments yesterday released data denying the suspected

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diversion of MSDF-supplied fuel for operations in Iraq. The two governments explained that the 675,000 gallons of fuel indirectly provided by an MSDF supply ship to the Kitty Hawk was "burned within a three-day time period" before her participation in Iraq operations. In the Diet, full-fledged debate kicked off, with the leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) pursuing the suspected diversion of MSDF-supplied fuel in a meeting yesterday of the House of Representatives Budget Committee. However, the Japanese government wants to draw this issue to a close, saying it has now accounted for the matter.

The government is preparing to make a cabinet decision on Oct. 17 to adopt a new antiterror legislation in order for Japan to continue the MSDF's refueling activities.

However, the Kitty Hawk switched her mission to back up Operation Southern Watch (OSW) against Iraq three days after she received the fuel. Given this fact, her suspected fuel diversion cannot be completely denied. The opposition bench is poised to continue pursuing the suspicion.

8) Opposition parties unconvinced by government's explanation on alleged diversion of MSDF-provided fuel for use in Iraq war

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

In a meeting of the House of Representatives Budget Committee yesterday, Defense Minister Ishiba denied the allegations that fuel provided by the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) to a US supply vessel in the Indian Ocean allegedly had been used in the Iraq war by disclosing the details of an explanation by the US government on the issue. The opposition camp, however, was not convinced with the government's explanation, criticizing it as insufficient. The showdown between the ruling and opposition parties is expected to escalate further.

It has been suspected that the US aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk indirectly received fuel from a MSDF refueling vessel on Feb. 25 in 2003 and then engaged in the war in Iraq. Over this charge of diversion, the government and the opposition bloc crashed head-on in the Budget Committee meeting yesterday. The point of contention was how the mission of the Kitty Hawk in the Persian Gulf was linked to the Iraq war. If it is proved true that the aircraft carrier had been involved in the Iraq war, the MSDF refueling service will be judged as violating the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law.

Upon admitting that the Kitty Hawk had entered the Persian Gulf after it indirectly received fuel from the MSDF, Ishiba stressed: "The aircraft carrier consumed all the fuel within three days (from Feb. 25). The fuel was not used in operations in Iraq (joined by the aircraft carrier) in March. He also revealed that Japan had received similar explanations from the US government.

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Deputy President Naoto Kan assailed that it was unnatural for the Kitty Hawk in the Persian Gulf to fly aircraft toward Afghanistan in the reverse direction. He then emphasized: "It is natural to see that the aircraft carrier had engaged in monitoring activities in Iraq."

Ishiba made this counterargument: "It is extremely irrational to reach the conclusion (that the MSDF-supplied fuel was used in the

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Iraq war), citing the reason that the aircraft carrier had sailed into the Persian Gulf." The basic plan in the Antiterrorism Law specifies "the Indian Ocean, including the Persian Gulf" as the area of supportive activities. However, even government officials say that the operations remain ambiguous, with a Foreign Ministry source commenting: "Although we hear that aircraft had flown from the Persian Gulf to Afghanistan, we were not informed of the details of the aircraft carrier's operations in the Persian Gulf, because such information is a military secret."

Meanwhile, the DPJ is set to press the government to disclose

information on the diversion allegation and the MSDF refueling operation. Vice President Katsuya Okada said: "Various questions have come up regarding the Antiterrorism Law. There are many matters on which information should be disclosed."

9) Diet debate: Defense minister learns from US that amount of fuel provided by MSDF to USS Kitty Hawk was 675,000 gallons

YOMIURI (Page 9) (Excerpts)
October 11, 2007

Refueling mission in Indian Ocean

Kan (Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ)): On the morning of Feb. 25, 2003, the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) supply ship Tokiwa refueled the US supply ship Pecos, and on the afternoon of that day, Pecos refueled the USS Kitty Hawk. In this regard, then Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda stated positively at a press briefing on May 9 that it would be impossible to use (the fuel provided by Tokiwa) for operations in Iraq.

Prime Minister Fukuda: There was an error in collecting data. What I said at the time was incorrect.

Kan: Which part of your remark at the time was wrong?

Fukuda: I made two mistakes. First, the amount of fuel provided by Japan to the US supply ship (was 800,000 gallons in actuality) but it was mistakenly entered into the computer system as 200,000 gallons. Afterwards, we on the part of the government explained that the amount of fuel provided by (Pecos) to Kitty Hawk was 800,000 gallons, but we learned after inquiring of the US about this matter that the amount of fuel in question was 675,000 gallons.

Kan: I have a suspicion that then Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda might have known that Kitty Hawk had headed for the Persian Gulf.

Defense Minister Ishiba: Tokiwa refueled Pecos during the period from 6:30 a.m. through 10:00 a.m. of Feb. 25. The amount of fuel provided was 800,000 gallons. In order to join Kitty Hawk by noon, Pecos moved in the direction of the Strait of Hormuz. By around 20:00 p.m. of that day, Pecos completed refueling Kitty Hawk. The amount of fuel provided by Pecos to Kitty Hawk was 675,000 gallons. After being refueled, Kitty Hawk passed the Strait of Hormuz by 20:00 p.m. of Feb. 25 and was engaged in operations in the Persian Gulf.

According to the US report shown to us in 2003, Kitty Hawk consumed some 20 gallons of fuel per day on average. We have been told by the US side that Kitty Hawk was engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and that after being refueled by Pecos, Kitty Hawk "consumed

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all the fuel" provided by Pecos in three days starting Feb. 25.

Ishiba: The most important point is that Kitty Hawk was cruising for a considerably longer period of time at the high speed of 33 knots when it was passing through the Strait of Hormuz. It seemed that Kitty Hawk also was cruising at the high speed when it was engaged in several flight operations. I presume in these cases Kitty Hawk would have consumed more fuel than its average consumption. I therefore think the US side's explanation that (Kitty Hawk) consumed 675,000 gallons in three days or by the end of February is highly reasonable. It is thought that the fuel provided would have been used for OEF. Operation Southern Watch (ODW) in Iraq started in early March.

10) Government turns down request for participation in ISAF

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

The Tokyo Shimbun learned yesterday that the government declined an unofficial request from countries participating in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for the Self-Defense Forces' participation in their operations.

More than one source revealed this. The sources said that the reason for the rejection is that it is constitutionally impossible to comply with such a request. Land operations by the ISAF involve more dangers than the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling operations in the Indian Ocean. In addition, the point has been made that such activities could be integrated into the use of armed force by other countries.

11) Ozawa becomes cautious about joining ISAF military department

MAINICHI (Page 3) (Full)
October 11, 2007

Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto or DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa held a press conference yesterday in which he exhibited cautiousness about directly joining the military department of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, saying, "I have questions about the ISAF's security operations." He also underlined the need to support the public welfare of Afghanistan, saying, "Above all, it is most important to bring stability to the general public." The DPJ's newsletter dated Oct. 5 carried Ozawa's statement that said: "Once our party holds the reigns of government, I would like to bring about Japan's participation in the ISAF."

Touching on ISAF participation, Ozawa maintained in the press conference that an action based on a UN resolution is not unconstitutional, saying, "Our policy platform also says so." With cautious views inside and outside the party in mind, Ozawa also said: "There is a minority opinion, but party members must act in accordance with party policy. If they don't like it, there is no other option but to leave the party."

Regarding the question of obtaining income from renting out condominiums purchased by his fund-management organization Rikuzan-kai with political funds, Ozawa indicated that he is considering selling one unoccupied condominium shortly and not receiving rental fees for another condominium from a foundation by letting Rikuzan-kai donate the rent to that foundation. He also

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revealed a plan to sell other properties after redeeming the loans. Regarding the Mainichi Shimbun's report on this problem, Ozawa said: "It is politically intended to libel me."

12) Ozawa: Members opposed to his idea on ISAF should leave party

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
October 11, 2007

In a press conference yesterday, Democratic Party of Japan President Ozawa referred to his idea of Japan's participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and suggested that Japan's operations should be related mainly to livelihood-related aid. Ozawa said: "Public welfare activities are included in ISAF. I am skeptical of the ongoing security activities." He also said: "DPJ members should follow party policy that was decided on by a majority. Those who do not agree with this idea should leave the party."

However, Vice President Seiji Maehara said in a panel discussion in Tokyo last night: "Views in the party have yet to be unified on the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law and antiterrorism operations."

Social Democratic Party President Fukushima criticized the Ozawa idea in a press conference yesterday:

"President Ozawa's idea is unconstitutional. It is now necessary for all opposition parties to take joint steps on the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law and new legislation to replace it in pressing the ruling camp to disclose related information. At such a time, why has he come up with such a proposal? It is hard to understand."

13) Maehara points to difference in views with Ozawa

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)

October 11, 2007

Seiji Maehara, former president of the Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto or DPJ), attended an open forum, held at a Tokyo hotel last night. Touching on President Ichiro Ozawa's proposal for joining the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, Maehara said:

"President Ozawa's view is different from mine. Views in the party have yet to be unified. I do not subscribe to the view that a country can do anything as long as there is a UN resolution. Many traditional DPJ members (since before the merger with the Liberal Party) find Mr. Ozawa's thinking disagreeable. Then again, we must all follow party policy."

14) "Mr. Ozawa's stance is unconstitutional," says SDP President Fukushima

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

Social Democratic Party President Mizuho Fukushima during a press conference yesterday criticized Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) President Ozawa's proposal for participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), noting, "The standpoint of the Constitution does not allow the use of armed force in any circumstance. Mr. Ozawa's stance is unconstitutional."

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Fukushima also said, "I do not understand why Mr. Ozawa says such a thing at a time when opposition parties should press the government in unity to disclose information."

15) "We will sell the properties in the near future," says DPJ head Ozawa

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) President Ozawa, referring yesterday in news conference to the issue of Rikuzan-kai, his fund management body, earning rent income from condominiums purchased with political funds, said, "We are still repaying loans for other properties as well. However, since the repayment of loans will be over soon, we want to sell those properties." He revealed that he plans to sell more than ten properties owned by Rikuzan-kai.

Regarding the body earning rent income, Ozawa explained, "At first, the plan was to rent them without charge. However, since the tenants later told us that they wanted to pay rent in some form or other, we charged them rent." He once again indicated his view that the case is not a violation of the Political Funds Control Law, which bans such transactions.

16) DPJ to submit two tax, fiscal bills to Diet to undermine government budget compilation

ASAHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
October 11, 2007

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has decided to submit two bills - a bill related to fiscal resources and another bill related to tax reform - to an ordinary Diet session to be held early next year. The main opposition party intends to present ways to secure fiscal resources to implement its pledges for the earlier House of Councillors election. It also aims to play up its capability to assume political power by challenging the government on budget compilation. Meanwhile, even with an eye on a consumption tax hike, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) will shift priority to fiscal discipline and pose questions about the DPJ's stance of putting a consumption tax hike under seal. A dispute on fiscal resources may be taken up as a campaign issue in the next general election.

The DPJ has decided to push ahead with work on legislation to

coincide with the government's work to reform the tax system and compile a budget bill for next fiscal year. The LDP and the DPJ are likely to engage in fierce competition over specific measures to reform expenditures and revenues.

The DPJ plans to compile early next year its own FY2008 budget bill that would include policies presented in its manifesto for the latest Upper House election. In an interview with Asahi Shimbun yesterday, Tax System Research Council Chairman Hirohisa Fujii said: "We will show a difference between the bills of ours and the LDP. We will represent the bases of the fiscal mechanism and the tax system in our bill."

17) Another "Kaku-Fuku war"; Makiko Tanaka to question at Lower House committee session tomorrow

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YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
October 11, 2007

The main opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) decided yesterday to have former Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka, an independent belonging to the DPJ's parliamentary group, appear as a questioner in a session tomorrow of the House of Representatives Audit and Oversight of Administration Committee, in which Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda is expected to attend. Fukuda's father, former Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda, and Tanaka's father, former Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka were engaged in a bitter political battle called the "Kaku-Fuku war," competing for the prime minister's post.

A senior DPJ member said:

"We want Tanaka to grill the prime minister with her bitter tongue. As the second Kaku-Fuku war, the plan would attract public attention. The DPJ will not make any special requests so that she can pose questions in her own inimitable way."

Fukuda was chief cabinet secretary in the first cabinet of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who sacked Tanaka from the foreign minister's post. He was called "shadow foreign minister" since he gave foreign ministry officials directions from the Prime Minister's Official Residence.

18) Japanese college student kidnapped in Iran

YOMIURI (Top play) (Excerpts)
October 11, 2007

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) established an emergency headquarters headed by Senior Vice Foreign Minister Itsunori Onodera in response to the information that a 23-year-old male Japanese college student had been kidnapped in Iran when he was traveling in Southeast Iran.

According to MOFA, this Japanese man contacted the Japanese Embassy in Teheran on Oct. 8 and told it that "I was detained by someone." Since then MOFA has been collecting information about this case and also has telephoned Iranian Foreign Minister Motaki and asked for cooperation so that the detained Japanese man would be released safely.

Upon confirming the information, MOFA has now judged that there is no doubt that the Japanese man was kidnapped. As for who kidnapped the Japanese man and what the kidnapper is demanding, MOFA said that "we can't reveal them."

The security situation is aggravating in East Iran bordering with Afghanistan and South Iran as armed groups and security troops are clashing with each other. Foreigners have become the target of kidnapping and in fact, they have been detained in those areas.

MOFA in its overseas travel information has given this advice about East Iran bordering with Afghanistan: "It is advisable to postpone traveling this area." Regarding Southeast Iran bordering with

Afghanistan, where the Japanese man was kidnapped this time, MOFA has given this advice: "It is advisable to reconsider whether to travel there."

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19) Prime Minister to visit US in mid-November or later

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

Hirohiko Sakaguchi

Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura yesterday made mention of Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda's first overseas trip as a prime minister in a speech given in Tokyo and noted: "I think the prime minister will presumably choose the United States as a country for him to visit as his first overseas trip. Although it is impossible to set his overseas trip within this month, we need to start preparations so that the prime minister can visit the US sometime in November." In this regard, a government source commented, "It is unlikely that the prime minister will visit the US sometime before Nov. 10, (until then the Diet is in session)," indicating that the prime minister would visit the US in mid-November or later.

The prime minister's attendance at a summit of ASEAN plus Japan, China, and South Korea in Singapore slated for Nov. 20 has been already set. The prime minister's plan is to visit the US around that time and hold the first summit meeting with President Bush after taking office as prime minister. Following this plan, coordination is underway between Japan and the US.

A high-level government official said yesterday, "It is desirable for the prime minister to travel to China early next year," revealing that coordination is underway for the prime minister to visit China in January.

Also, Fukuda told reporters at the Prime Minister's Official Residence, "Japan-US relations form the basis of Japanese diplomacy. I need to visit the US first. I want to travel to Asian nations (after visiting the US)." Fukuda thus revealed that his US visit would come first.

20) "The US will be the destination of the prime minister's first foreign visit," says Machimura

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
October 11, 2007

Delivering a speech in Tokyo, Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura yesterday noted that the government is now undertaking coordination in order to realize the prime minister's US visit. He said, "The US will be the first country Prime Minister Fukuda will visit." He said, "It is not true that the Fukuda cabinet will tilt toward China in one sweep, neglecting Japan's relations with the US. The selection of the US as the destination of his first foreign trip will send a message that he is attaching importance to Japan-US relations." Prime Minister Fukuda himself also said the same evening, "I had conversation with US President Bush. We talked that we should meet as soon as possible."

21) Prime Minister Fukuda intends to modify the previous pressure line toward DPRK and "comprehensively resolve" the nuclear and abduction issue

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
October 11, 2007

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Kahori Onaka, Ryuko Tadokoro

In response to a Diet question about the North Korean issue yesterday, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda noted, "The important thing

is to comprehensively resolve it," indicating his intention to comprehensively resolve a number of issues involving North Korea, including abductions of Japanese nationals, as well as nuclear and missile developments, and then to normalize diplomatic ties with that country. Fukuda was replying to a question by Seiji Maehara of the major opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) at a Lower House Budget Committee session yesterday. Fukuda gave a similar reply at a Lower House representative interpellation on Oct. 4. Although his predecessor, former Prime Minister Abe stated, "No diplomatic normalization without resolving the abduction issue," Fukuda has now again given the impression that he is shifting away from the former Abe administration's pressure line.

Maehara asked what was the basis of the Fukuda administration's policy toward North Korea, arguing, "If you insist that Japan will not offer any assistance without any progress on the abduction issue, that will only limit a range of diplomatic approaches for Japan to make." In response, Fukuda said: "We need to resolve the abduction issue, but we also need to resolve the nuclear and missile issues. My basic stance is to make efforts to comprehensively resolve all of them, while keeping a balance between them."

DONOVAN